CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently amended) A method of transferring a host identity between a first host system and a second host system, wherein a host identity ~~can belong~~ is allocated to only one host system at a time, the method comprising:

    [[i)]] designating the second host system as a destination host system for the host identity that is allocated to the first host system;

    [[ii)]] the first host system encoding the host identity to be transferred using a parameter;

    [[iii)]] the first host system ~~divulging the result of the encoding~~ transferring the encoded host identity to the second host system and removing the host identity from its repository;

    [[iv)]] the second host system, which also includes a host identity repository, decoding the host identity ~~to be transferred~~ using the parameter, and adding the host identity ~~to be transferred~~ to its repository.

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein ~~in step (iii), the~~ said ~~divulging of the result of the encoding~~ transferring the encoded host identity to the second host system and ~~the removal of~~ removing the host identity from the repository of the first host system ~~is~~ are performed atomically.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, ~~wherein in step (iii),~~ further comprising the first host system ~~also records~~ recording the result of the encoding.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the parameter is a property of the second host system.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the property is a serial number.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first host system encodes the host identity to be transferred using a signature.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the host identity is used for software licensing.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first and second host systems are each respective service processors in multi-computer system.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein at least one said service processor is operable to allocate host identities to respective ones of a plurality of sub-systems.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein said at least one service processor is a shelf service processor for a shelf of a rack mountable blade system and at least one said sub-system is a processor blade receivable in the shelf.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein an initiating entity designates the second host system as the destination host system for the host identity.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein an initiating entity also designates the first host system as a source for the host identity to be transferred.

14. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the initiating entity is an administrator system.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the administrator system is a system management server for a blade system.

16.   (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein an administrator system is operable to log host identity transactions, and wherein:

[[a]]   in a first phase, the administrator system operates as an intermediate destination host system~~, and steps (i) — (iv) are performed with the administrator forming the destination host system~~; and

[[b]]   in a second phase, the administrator system operates as an intermediate source host system ~~and steps (i) — (iv) are performed with the administrator forming the source host system.~~

17.   (Currently amended) A method of transferring a host identity between a first host system and a second host system, wherein a host identity ~~can belong~~ is allocated to only one host system at a time, the method comprising:

[[a]]   in a first phase[[,]]:

[[i)]]   an administrator system designating itself as an intermediate destination for the host identity allocated to the first host system ~~to be transferred,~~

[[ii)]]   the first host system, which includes a host identity repository, encoding the host identity to be transferred using a first parameter,

[[iii)]]   the first host system ~~divulging the result of the encoding~~ transferring the encoded host identity to the administrator system and removing the host identity from its repository, and

[[iv)]]   the administrator system decoding the host identity to be transferred using the first parameter, and buffering the host identity to be transferred; and

[[b]]   in a second phase[[,]]:

[[i)]]   the administrator system designating the second host system as a destination for the host identity to be transferred,

[[ii)]]   the administrator system encoding the host identity to be transferred using a second parameter,

[[iii)]]   the administrator system ~~divulging the result of the encoding~~ <u>transferring the encoded host identity to the second host system</u> and removing the host identity from its buffer, and

[[v)]]   the second host system, which also includes a host identity repository, decoding the host identity ~~to be transferred~~ using the second parameter, and ~~adds~~ <u>adding</u> the host identity ~~to be transferred~~ to its repository.

18.   (Currently amended) The method of claim [[15]]<u>17</u>, wherein, in the second phase, the administrator system is further operable to log the transfer of the host identity.

19.   (Currently amended) A computer system comprising ~~a first host system and a second host system, wherein~~:

[[-]]<u>a</u> ~~the~~ first host system ~~comprises~~ <u>including</u> a host identity repository<u>, wherein a host identity is allocated to the first host system</u>; <u>and</u>

[[-]]<u>a</u> ~~the~~ second host system ~~comprises~~ <u>including</u> a host identity repository;

[[-]]<u>wherein the</u> [[a]] host identity ~~can belong~~ <u>is allocated</u> to only one host system at a time;

[[-]]<u>wherein</u> ~~the first host system is operable,~~ in response to the second host system being designated as a destination host system for [[a]] <u>the</u> host identity <u>that is allocated to the first host system</u> ~~to be transferred~~, <u>the first host system is configured to</u>:

[[- to]] encode the host identity to be transferred using a parameter, ~~and~~

[[- to]] ~~divulge the result of the encoding~~ <u>transfer the encoded host identity to the second host system,</u> and

[[to]] remove the host identity from its repository; and

[[-]]<u>wherein</u> the second host system is operable, when presented with the encoded host identity, to decode the host identity using the parameter, and to add the host identity ~~to be transferred~~ to its repository.

20.   (Currently amended) The computer system of claim 19, wherein the first computer system is operable to ~~perform the divulging of the result of the encoding~~

<u>transfer the encoded host identity to the second host system</u> and ~~the removal of~~ <u>remove</u> the host identity from its repository atomically.

21.   (Original) The computer system of claim 19, wherein the first host system also records the result of the encoding.

22.   (Original) The computer system of claim 19, wherein the parameter is a property of the second host system.

23.   (Original) The computer system of claim 22, wherein the property is a serial number.

24.   (Original) The computer system of claim 19, wherein the first host system encodes the host identity to be transferred using a signature.

25.   (Original) The computer system of claim 19, wherein the host identities are used for software licensing.

26.   (Original) The computer system of claim 19, wherein the first and second host systems are each respective service processors.

27.   (Original) The computer system of claim 26, wherein at least one said service processor is operable to allocate host identities to respective ones of a plurality of sub-systems.

28.   (Original) The computer system of claim 27, wherein said at least one service processor is a shelf service processor for a shelf of a rack mountable blade system and at least one said sub-system is a processor blade receivable in the shelf.

29.   (Cancelled)

30. (Original) The computer system of claim 19, wherein an initiating entity is operable to designate the second host system as the destination host system for the host identity.

31. (Original) The computer system of claim 30, wherein an initiating entity is also operable to designate the first host system as a source for the host identity to be transferred.

32. (Original) The computer system of claim 31, wherein the initiating entity is an administrator system.

33. (Original) The computer system of claim 32, wherein the administrator system is a system management server for a blade system.

34. (Original) The computer system of claim 19, wherein an administrator system is operable to log host identity transactions.

35. (Currently amended) A computer system comprising ~~an administrator system, a first host system and a second host system, wherein~~:

an administrator system;

[[-]]a ~~the~~ first host system ~~comprises~~ including a host identity repository, wherein a host identity is allocated to the first host system; and

[[-]]a ~~the~~ second host system ~~comprises~~ including a host identity repository;

[[-]]wherein the [[a]] host identity ~~can belong~~ is allocated to only one host system at a time; ~~and~~ ,

wherein the computer system is operable, in order to transfer [[a]] the host identity from the first host system to the second host system, such that:

[[a)]] in a first phase,

[[i)]] the administrator system designates itself as an intermediate destination for the host identity to be transferred,

    [[iv)]] the first host system encodes the host identity to be transferred using a first parameter,

    [[v)]] the first host system ~~divulges the result of the encoding~~ transfers the encoded host identity to the administrator system and removes the host identity from its repository, and

    [[vi)]] the administrator system decodes the host identity to be transferred using the first parameter, and buffers the host identity to be transferred; and

[[b)]] in a second phase,

    [[i)]] the administrator system designates the second host system as a destination for the host identity to be transferred,

    [[v)]] the administrator system encodes the host identity to be transferred using a second parameter,

    [[vi)]] the administrator system ~~divulges the result of the encoding~~ transfers the encoded host identity to the second host system and removes the host identity from its buffer, and

    [[vii)]] the second host system decodes the host identity ~~to be transferred~~ using the second parameter, and adds the host identity ~~to be transferred~~ to its repository.

36.   (Currently amended) A computer system comprising a first host system and a second host system to which can be allocated a host identity, wherein a host identity ~~can belong~~ is allocated to only one host at a time, the computer system comprising:

[[-]]means for designating the second host as a destination for [[a]] the host identity that is allocated to the first host system ~~to be transferred~~;

[[-]]means for encoding, at the first host system, the host identity to be transferred with a parameter,

[[-]]means for ~~divulging the result of the encoding~~ transferring the encoded host identity to the second host system and means for removing the host identity from repository means of the first host system;

[[-]]means for decoding, at the second host system, the host identity to be transferred using the parameter, and means for adding the decoded host identity to repository means of the second host system.

37.   (Cancelled)